June 2003

CANADA: Most locations in eastern Canada have been experiencing good growing conditions and adequate water supplies. The Atlantic and Quebec agricultural regions have had near- to slightly below-average precipitation. Precipitation patterns across southern Ontario were scattered during June. The growing season totals are generally near average.

Dry conditions persist in Manitoba's Interlake region and northwest agricultural regions. Many of the lakes in Manitoba and northwest Ontario are at unusually low levels for this time of year. This includes the larger lakes: Lake Winnipegosis (lowest summer level since 1964), Lake Manitoba (lowest summer level since 1944), Lake Winnipeg (lowest summer level since 1977), and Lake of the Woods (lowest summer level since 1988). These low lake levels are mainly the result of a dry autumn in 2002, a below-normal snowpack during the 2002-2003 winter season, and a relatively dry spring in 2003.

Eastern regions of Saskatchewan are experiencing spotty precipitation. Although crop conditions in Saskatchewan are generally average, a lack of subsoil moisture in the east and moisture deficits from previous drought years would suggest that timely rains are critical. The exceptional drought conditions that were experienced in Alberta and Saskatchewan in the past few years have left some producers in the northern agricultural regions of these provinces with some water supply shortages, low carry over on pastures and lower-than-average hay production potential. Growing season precipitation to date in the western half of the Prairies has provided good growing conditions. Drought conditions are an issue for the Peace River Region in Alberta and Peace River Region, British Columbia. Some isolated dry conditions are also occurring in southwest Alberta and southern central and coastal areas of British Columbia.

Of significant note is the grasshopper infestations in agricultural regions of the Canadian Prairies, which range from light to very severe.

UNITED STATES: Like May, June was a cool and wet month across most of the United States. For the country, June ranked as the 6th coolest and the 7th wettest June since 1895. Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania had their coolest June temperatures ever, with twenty additional states experiencing one of the ten coolest Junes since 1895. Meanwhile, Alabama, Delaware, and New Jersey had their third wettest June in history, with nine other states again in the top ten wettest for the month. Tropical Storm Bill moved onshore in Louisiana on June 30th, and its associated heavy rains moved across Alabama and into the Carolinas during the next several days. Oregon, however, had its driest June ever, and Washington had its fifth driest June. Alaska had its second warmest June on record.

As for the changes to the drought regions during the month, most of the western United States remained at some level of drought, ranging from the moderate to the exceptional categories. The only major change in the west from the previous month was the addition of a large area of "abnormal dryness" (D0) in Washington and Oregon affecting agricultural interests because of the recent dryness across the area. There were also large-scale improvements across parts of the central and southern Plains, including Texas. In the Midwest, there were some improvements

during the month, as well as the introduction of abnormal dryness near Lake Michigan.

As the month neared its end, heat and dryness were occurring across many of the western and central parts of the country. For this reason, most of the drought and dryness areas are considered to have both agricultural and hydrological impacts.

MEXICO: Drought conditions in Mexico showed only minor changes in June. Drought conditions across northwest Mexico remained almost unchanged from those observed in May, with extreme drought conditions (D3) noted in southeast Sonora, northern Sinaloa and far western Chihuahua. The monsoon in this region was greatly delayed from a normal start date within the third week of June, with many coastal locations not receiving rainfall until the second week of July. Cold waters off the west coast of Mexico may have contributed to the late start of the monsoon in northwest Mexico. In contrast, improved moisture conditions were noted over north-central Mexico, where reservoirs in Zacatecas approached typical levels for late June. Moisture conditions also improved in sections of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and northern Tamaulipas.

After a delayed onset of the monsoon season in May over central and southern Mexico, these regions received normal to above-normal rainfall in June. The improved moisture conditions were attributed to the influence of tropical storms over the eastern North Pacific, as well as a very active progression of easterly waves from the Caribbean across southern Mexico. With this tropical activity, near-normal moisture conditions were noted in the region from Mexico City south to the coasts of Guerrero and Oaxaca. A number of coastal sections from southern Tamaulipas to Veracruz, Tabasco, and Chiapas and into the central Yucatan Peninsula received less than 75% of their normal June precipitation. Consequently, abnormally dry (D0) to moderate drought (D1) conditions spread over these parts of the country.